



TWIN CITIES ATARI INTEREST GROUP

Next meeting : May 22nd

Table of Contents

Membership Report	Page 3	April Meeting Minutes	Page 3
Editors Notes	Page 4	File Compaction Systems	Page 5
Wall Street Report?	Page 6		



The TAIG Newsletter

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President	Chuck Grimsby
Vice President	Eric Hopper
Treasurer	Ken Modeen
Secretary	Sue Loye
SysOp	Ken Modeen
8-Bit DOM	Greg Gibbons

If you represent another Atari users group that wishes to exchange newsletters, please mail a copy of your newsletter to TAIG.

Articles should be submitted in standard text files such as Atari Writer, SpeedScript, Word Writer etc. Please save files in ASCII with NO text formatting codes. You can send the article to TAIG, drop it off at a meeting or upload it to the BBS.

Any storage media will be returned at the next meeting or mailed to you.

Membership	Ken Modeen
BBS	425-2533
*** Newsletter ***	
Editor	Tom Green
Co-Editor	Cory Johnson
Co-Editor	Steve Ingalsbe

TAIG Membership Application

New_____ Renewal_____ Change_____

Name_____

Address_____

City_____

State_____ Zip Code_____ Phone_____

Type of computer_____

Interests_____

Membership dues are \$15 per family per year. Please make checks payable to the Twin Cities Atari Interest Group. Please do not mail cash. Mail to:

TAIG
PO Box 26128
Minneapolis, Mn. 55426

Notes From the Membership Chairman By Ken Modeen

My wife and I have spent much time over the last week converting the membership data over to my data base of preference. In the process, I exhumed over forty non-renewed members that had found their way off the database. I have put them back on the database with an expired status. You never know when we may want to hold an open house for ex-members to re-kindle their interest in T.A.I.G. I plan to run things pertaining to the membership a little differently than the last chairman. Mainly, I'd like to try a bit more of a personal approach to the job. I will not be publishing the names of members who need to renew their membership in the newsletter or on the bbs. Instead, a notice will be inserted into the newsletter that is to be sent to the particular member that needs to renew his or her membership. This month we will be sending out 25 notices for renewal. We will also send out 50 notices (over time as extra newsletters and money permits) to long expired members, asking them to consider rejoining T.A.I.G. My fellow members, There is no question about it, T.A.I.G. lives or dies by these annual memberships. If you receive a notice in your newsletter to renew your membership, please respond promptly, we need your support to make it through the summer.

On another topic:

Fifty five dollars have been donated by T.A.I.G. members towards the purchase of the hard drive set up. Mainly it will purchase the case, power supply and the controller for the 10 meg drive that was donated by Cory Johnson. An adaptor was donated by Craig Peterson. I want to say, I am very proud to be in the company of the members listed below who responded to the hard drive pledge drive.

Nathan Block	Steve Ingalsbe
Tom Green	Jim Johnson
Kurt Modeen	Greg Gibbons
H. Dean Connor	Gary Lindsay
Richard Mier	

A second 10 meg hard drive may be loaned to the group by a member, that however, is still in discussion. Any and all other members are certainly welcome to donate toward the hard drive also. Just send a note with your donation stating that its for the hard drive to the T.A.I.G. P.O. box. We really only need another fifty bucks to pay the entire cost of the harddrive.

A personal note:

I'd like to think I've been a pretty active member over the last two years that I've been a T.A.I.G. member. Being only a two year member, I've seen only the board of officers that just stepped down in april. I have worked fairly closely with them since I've had the BBS, and before that I've attended every meeting and listened to what they have had in mind and what actions they have taken. I truly believe that they are the reason the club has been able to survive over the last two years. The new slate of officers will be hard pressed to do as well as these gentlemen have done. They had plenty to do, and little resources to do it with. We will be undoubtedly asking the general membership for help in many ways. I believe T.A.I.G. will sink or swim according to the response.

Help support T.A.I.G. support you.
T.A.I.G. Membership Chairman
Ken Modeen

APRIL 24th MEETING MINUTES Secretary: Sue Loye

The meeting was called to order at 7:00 p.m. by president Steve Ingalsbe. The newsletter was late this month due to problems with the printer.

The contents of future DOMs will be listed in the newsletter prior to the meeting at which the disks will be available.

It was announced that if you buy QUICKCODE by the end of April you will receive a 30% discount.

Continued on next page

Tom Green gave the number for the U.S. Naval Observatory BBS: (202) 653-1079

TAIG has copies of the Icon Shop Manual for anyone who bought The Icon Shop and wants it.

April 8-Bit DOMs: (2) Icon Shop Disk #7
Print Shop Utilities.

There was a demo of the XEP-80 eighty column card for the 8-Bit. Thanks to Carl Hartness for the use of the XEP-80 for the demo.

Craig Peterson brought in an interface for the BBS hard drives. TAIG will buy a case, power supply and controller from Steve Ingalsbe for \$100.00. Two hard drives for use on the BBS are being donated. Ken Modeen reported that \$45.00 has been donated to defray the cost of the equipment being bought from Steve. Anyone else who wishes to make a donation is free to do so.

Nathan Block announced Epyx is releasing Summer Games for the XEGS. Winter games should follow shortly. Also, Electronic Arts will release no new software for Atari 8-Bit computers.

Chad Rieschl was nominated for Secretary.

Voting took place for the new TAIG officers by written ballot.

The 1988-89 officers are:
President - Chuck Grimsby
Vice Pres - Eric Hopper
Secretary - Sue Loye
Treasurer - Ken Modeen

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.-



TAIG's BBS
To get the latest info concerning TAIG and Atari Computers, call the TAIG BBS at 425-2533. The BBS runs 24 hours.

A SPECIAL INVITATION TO ATARI OWNERS

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Newsletter Report By Tom Green

As you can see the newsletter is a little smaller this month. Hopefully we will have more articles next month. Please send us YOUR articles.

Thanks to Ken Modeen and Greg Gibbons for getting files for the newsletter to me. My modem crashed and burned and I am telecommunicationless(?) for awhile. I hope to have some kinda modem this month so I can download the articles.

The midwests largest computer / electronics swap fest will be held June 4th and 5th at the State Fairgrounds on Snelling and Larpenteur. For more information come to the next meeting. Hopefully TAIG will be able to have a booth at this years Amateur Fair.

See you all at the next meeting...

- Tom -

A review of file compaction systems (A second look) By Marty Albert Reprinted from the ACORN KERNAL

Well, today, in GENie Mail, I had a note that was sent to me by Jeff Kyle for Bob Puff, the author of Disk Comm for the Atari 8-bit computers. The basic gist of Bob's letter and the note that Jeff sent along was that the reasons that I had trouble with Disk Comm is that SpartaDos "has to many bugs for me".

Since I don't want to get into a DOS "war", nor is that the reason for these comparisons, I decided that I would repeat the tests with a more "standard" DOS, namely Atari DOS 2.5.

The system used is a 256K 800XL with a single Atari 1050 Drive with US Doubler chips. I used the standard 130XE RAMDisk set as D8: for a 499 sector RAM drive.

The programs tested were SHRINK XE version 1.00, SCRUNCH 2 version 2.0, Disk Comm 3.2, and ARC/ARCX version 1.2.

Since I used Atari DOS 2.5, bytes mean nothing. All the file sizes are in terms of single density sectors. The files used for testing we as follows:

Binary load file	65 Sectors
SAVED BASIC file	64 Sectors
Daisy-Dot *.NLQ file	15 Sectors
Atari font file	09 Sectors
Text file	60 Sectors
RLE Picture file	48 Sectors
Koala picture file	27 Sectors
AMS Song file	52 Sectors
Total Sectors	340 Sectors

Note also that the X saved is in terms of the sectors used, which will of course be the same as the reduction in XModem blocks needed to transmit the file. The following table is a summary of the test results.

Program	Time Cre.	Time Rec.	Size	%Change
SHRINK XE	1:25	0:50	331	-2.72%
SCRUNCH 2	4:30	5:36	325	-4.62%
DISK COMM	4:08	1:34	326	-4.29%
ARC/ARCX	5:20	6:04	249	-36.55%

So there is the data. Now for a few observations made while the test was going on...

SHRINK XE

This is a nice little program. I like it, as I have liked all the past versions of SHRINK. It's fast, in fact, MUCH faster than anything else in the test. It's easy to use with a nice menu. It allows the verification of files without actually needing to recover them. All in all, Shrink XE is a good option to use. The only problem that I see is that it does very little compaction. I guess you can't have everything, but I sure want it!

SCRUNCH 2

This is another good program, but it is a bit slow. In fact Scrunch was not that much faster than ARC, especially when you look at all the compaction difference. But Scrunch does seem to work flawlessly in operation.

DISK COMM

Here we go again. No matter what I say, I'll get nailed for it. But that's life! Disk Comm is good. It's faster than ARC but slower than Shrink. It compacts better than Shrink, but nowhere near what ARC does. On this test, I had none of the problems loading Disk Comm that I did in the last test. First try I made, it ran like champ. Bob also hinted at the idea that my copy of Disk Comm was damaged because I had gotten it in ARC format. Well, the copy that I used for this test was the same copy as for the previous test. Sort of rules that out. Now on to what I really like about Disk Comm... The menu and use has to be one of the best and most user friendly that I have ever seen, and I've been in the field for over 25 years now. It is simply put, fantastic!

Bob Puff has put a lot of thought and energy and time into the design. It would be very easy to use with no documentation whatever.

ARC/ARCX

Ok, here it is again. ARC is the slowest but it also is the one that does the most compaction. The fact that CRC errors happen is real. Jeff, in his note, stated

Continued on next page

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that the CRC errors do not happen because of XModem padding and that the file is, "...damaged in some way. It may not be easily noticable, but it's there." While that is, in strict terms, true, it still doesn't matter. If a text file has 10 characters on the end that are XModem padding, and the ARC/ARCX process changes one of the, the file indeed has been damaged. But, so what? Does it harm the way the file works? No. So long as a file is not OPERATIONALLY changed, who cares? Not me. Especially if I'm saving 35% of the time/money needed to download the file.

In Conclusion

So, it looks like the data is really unchanged, except that we now see that Shrink is now the fastest of the bunch. Bob mentioned that, "And the fact that CIS [CompuServe - Editor] named Disk Comm their official boot disk standard tells me they have no problem with it

either." I can't speak for what CIS does or doesn't do, nor can I really speak for what GENie does or doesn't do. I have no contact with CIS at all. On GENie, as I have said all along, whatever the Round-Table members want is what I will do. However, in the recent online survey on GENie, it was shown that the members had the following preferences :

ARC	53%	SCOPY	1%
Scrunch	2%	Other	1%
Shrink	2%	None	8%
Diskcomm	7%	No pref.	25%

While this only Reflects the attitudes of the GENie users that took the survey, it's all we have.

As I said in my prior article, we do need something better than anything that's out there now. I just wish that I had the skill to write it!

'WALL STREET' How to win BIG! By Tom Green

On the disk in the latest issue of STart (Special issue # 3) there is a game called Wall Street, which was written in GFA basic and compiled. Wall Street was written by Tony Lovell and an enhanced version called Wall Street Wizard is a commercial program. For ordering information contact Tony Lovell, Lovell Marketing, 699 Eglinton Ave. West, Suite 207, Toronto, Ontario M5N 1C6, Canada.

In Wall Street you start with \$10,000 and have 52 weeks to make as much money as possible, your goal is \$1,000,000. You can (of course) buy and sell shares, use the index menu to study the market index. After buying and selling stock, you click on 'Finish Trading' and the stocks do their thing and you are shown a graph of how each stock faired.

Wall Street lets you know about market flurries and occasionally different brokers will offer free advice. While playing the game you can BUY advice from any of the three brokers, Nervous Norman, Cautious Charlie or Wild-Eyed Willie.

Continued on next page

Each visit to a broker costs you \$50. In the article in STart explaining how to play the game it says, "What influences a stock's price? The laws of supply and demand are the dominant forces, although the market changes according to such influences as business activity, stock performance, market conditions and investor optimism. To make a profit on the stock market, you have to buy your shares at as low a price as possible, and sell the shares later for a higher price."

The program keeps track of the Top Ten Tycoons. In order to get on the list, you need to make more than \$50,000. It took me a few tries to get on the list, and many more tries to finally make a million dollars by the end of the game. I would use the brokers advice and usually just got by. After my neighbor came over and beat my \$1,392,457 score, I decided it was time to get serious with the program and try to figure out the best attack. Although randomness is involved, there probably is not enough randomness, in just a half hour or so, I was making so much money that it would take 2-3 minutes to get rid of all your stock and buy new stock. The decision as to what stock to sell and what to buy didn't take much time, but telling the computer how MANY shares you wanted to buy and sell would take up to 3 minutes. The computer uses scientific notation when the numbers get over 100 billion, and you can only see the first 3-6 digits of the numbers which would sometimes reach 20 digits.

When the game starts you will notice that Meditronics stock sells for 45 cents, this is the cheapest stock. Buy all you can, 22,222 shares. It probably won't go up right away, but hang on long enough so you make a profit, generally this can be done within 15 weeks. You will probably have to go a minimum of 10 weeks anyways to allow the other stock prices to drop. Once other stock prices have dropped to less than 1 dollar, sell your Meditronics (At a profit) and buy whatever is the cheapest, it doesn't matter what it's history is or what any of the brokers say about it, just buy the CHEAPEST. You should be buying stock

for no more than 50 cents per share, if there is no stock that cheap, just wait. Don't bother buying a bunch of different stocks, buy all you can of ONE stock. If a stock jumps over 200% since you bought it, sell the stock. As long as some stock is selling for less than 50 cents a share, you can dump the stock you have, after it has gone up 200 or more percent. I have seen stocks rise as much as 4,000% in one week, once a stock goes big like that, you should get rid of it, it will drop like a rock once you do and you can buy it again in a week or two. If you continue to do this you will soon have too much money, you will have so much money you will get sick of having to move all those shares of stock around.

If you have just purchased billions of dollars worth of some stock, and you are informed that it really did well, make sure you pay close attention to how much it went up, NEVER, NEVER, sell at a loss. This may not be the way the programmer intended the game to be played, and it isn't as much fun to play it in this manner, but it sure gets you up on the Tycoon chart.

My high score? Well, I've played the game maybe 50 times, and so far my high score is :

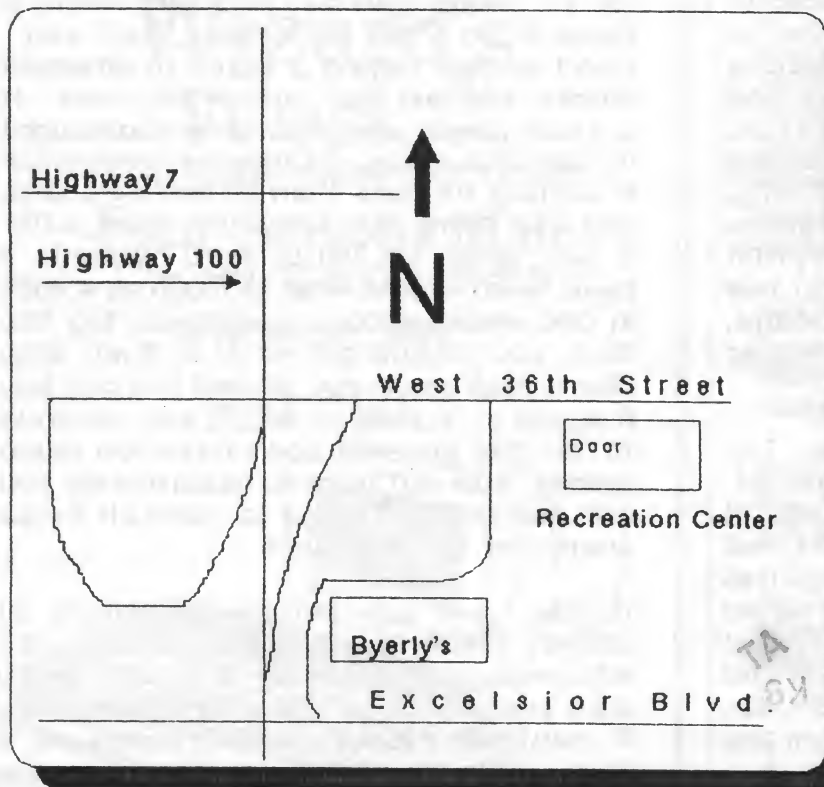
1.20,157,324,52E+22.2 Billion Dollars

Have fun and let me know YOUR high score.

For Sale / Wanted

If you have anything you want to sell or if you are looking for something, here is your opportunity to let the other members know about it. As a TAIG member you can place free ads in the newsletter. Leave a message on the BBS or give the ad to me or one of the officers and it will appear in the next newsletter. This is your newsletter so make use of it.

- The Editors -



TAIG holds it's monthly meetings at the St. Louis Park Recreation Center, which is located at 5005 West 36th Street in St. Louis Park. 3/4 mile east of highway 100 on west 36th, behind Byerly's.

Twin Cities Atari Interest Group
PO Box 26128
Minneapolis, Mn. 55426



Next TAIG Meeting :

Sunday May 22nd at 7:00 pm at the St. Louis Park Recreation Center, 5005 West 36th Street in St. Louis Park. 3/4 mile east of Highway 100 on 36th Street.